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Planning Your Lifestyle

THE GOOD LIFE REPORT:

What Is Fitness?

Many people know the benefits of regular, hard exercise, but still have trouble starting a fitness program. Others begin working out, only to stop weeks or months later.

How do people motivate themselves to exercise, and how do they find the will to persist?

A man who has exercised for fitness throughout the last 10 years, Dr. William T. Friedewald, associate director for disease prevention and health promotion at the National Institutes of Health, offers these ideas about keeping an exercise program going:

*Set a goal. Some people might

want to look better in a bathing suit. Or they want to feel more fit or sleep better. Others might aspire to enter a contest or to get in shape to hike, or bike or ski.

*Pick the right exercises. Starting a running program or going to a health club may scare off some people, Dr. Friedewald said, but just about anybody can walk. Choose exercises that are fun, convenient and effective. The workout should raise the heart rate to the proper level for at least 20 minutes three times a week.

*Follow a routine. Dr. Friedewald, who runs on Tuesdays,

Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, says a routine ensures that no matter what else is going on, exercise will become—and remain—part of one's lifestyle.

*Find a partner. Partners inspire one another to exercise. "I run with a group on Saturday mornings," Dr. Friedewald said. "So on Thursdays, when I run alone, I don't slack off or skip running. If I did, I couldn't keep up with my friends on Saturdays."

*Learn how to exercise safely. Often when people begin working out they overdo and injure themselves. This could disrupt, or even

destroy, their ability to work out.

Dr. Friedewald suggests learning safe ways—such as stretching and warm-up routines—to sustain vigorous aerobic activity.

The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports has published guidelines on walking, running and other aerobic workouts for inactive adults. Write to Fitness, PCPFS, 450 Fifth St. N.W., Suite 7103, Washington, D.C. 20001.

*Don't make excuses like "I'm too tired" or "I don't have time to exercise." Dr. Friedewald said that people who exercise regularly feel refreshed afterward, no matter how

tired they felt before working out.

When Dr. Friedewald started a running program in 1978, he said he did it mainly for general fitness and weight control. The disease-preventing effects of exercise were not well-known.

As scientists continue to find evidence that regular aerobic exercise helps prevent heart and other serious diseases, the health effects of physical fitness explain why so many people work out regularly and why so many other seek motivation to do the same, he said.



Walking For Physical Fitness

What makes a walk a workout? It's largely a matter of pace and distance. When you are walking to exercise, you don't stroll, stop to window shop or visit. You move out at a steady clip that is brisk enough to make your heart beat faster and to cause you to breathe more deeply.

Here are some tips to help you to develop a good walking style:

*Keep your head erect and back straight and let your arms swing loosely at your sides.

*Stay relaxed, breathe deeply and take comfortable steps.

*Always land on your HEEL and roll forward, finally pushing off the ball of your foot. Walking flat-footed or on the balls of your feet may cause fatigue or soreness.

*Your toes should point straight ahead. "Toeing-in" and "toeing-out" are inefficient ways of walking and may aggravate or contribute to leg/hip joint problems.

Questions about how far, how fast and how often you should walk can be answered by listening to your body. No one can tell you exactly how far or how fast to walk at the start, but you can determine the proper pace and distance by experimenting. If you've been inactive for a long time, it will take time to get into shape. Build up slowly. Try to set goals—otherwise you will be tempted to push yourself too far too quickly and exercise will cease to be enjoyable.

How far? You may want to start walking for just a few minutes and then gradually increase the time.

(Note the sample walking program.) Walking needs to be done for at least 30 minutes if your body is to achieve any "training effect."

How fast? The speed at which you walk is less important than the time you devote to it, although it is recommended that you walk as briskly as your condition permits. The "talk test" can help you find the right pace. You should be able to carry on a conversation while walking. If you are too breathless to talk, you're going too fast. When walking, should you develop dizziness, pain, nausea or other unusual symptoms, slow down or stop. If your problem persists, see your physician before walking again.

How often? Regularity is the key. To be effective, most authorities agree that you should walk five to six times a week to lose weight.

Warm-up and cool-down: Begin each session with five to ten minutes of stretching exercises for the head, arms, shoulders, legs and ankles. These exercises will give your body a chance to limber up, get your circulation going and loosen up muscles and joints. All stretching should be done slowly without bouncy, jerky motions.

After exercising, slow down gradually by walking slowly. If you have been walking briskly or jogging, repeat your stretching and limbering exercises to loosen up your muscles.

Footnote: A good pair of shoes is the only special equipment required for walking. Choose a shoe that is

comfortable and provides good support. Cushioned shoes with a slightly elevated heel and arch supports are preferable. Good running shoes are good walking shoes.

Select loose, comfortable clothes for your walks. In cold weather, it's better to wear several layers of light clothing than one or two heavy layers. The extra layers help to trap heat, and they are easy to shed if you get too warm. To maintain the proper body heat, always wear a cap during the cold weather.

GUIDELINES

Here are a few hints to help you develop a walking program:

1. **Warm up** before you begin, paying special attention to stretching the backs of the legs and thighs. Also, be sure to cool down slowly.

2. **Don't push yourself.** If you get tired, slow down. Try the "talk test." If you are too breathless to carry on a conversation, you're going too fast!

3. **Walk regularly.** If you don't exercise at least three times a week, you won't experience as many of the benefits of regular physical activity as you could, or make as much progress.

4. **Watch out for dogs and cars.** Wear light-colored clothes or a reflecting band during darkness so that drivers can see you. Face oncoming traffic and do not assume that drivers will notice you on the roadway.

Ideas To Help You Burn Up Calories

*Look for ways to burn calories in your everyday routine. Take the stairs rather than the elevator whenever you can. When you drive, park a little farther away and walk to where you're going.

*Get up and move. If you have a desk job, get up, stretch, and move around several times during the day. Use part of your lunch break to take a brisk walk. Watching TV? Don't go to the kitchen for a snack during commercials. Instead, try standing up and moving around during those breaks.

*Exercise regularly. Briskly walking 1 mile everyday will take less than 20 minutes. But over 1 year, you may lose 14 pounds! Small changes add up to more weight lost or pounds kept off.

*If you like sports, you can burn even more calories. Join a fitness class with a friend, go swimming, or join a sports team. Even if you don't like sports, start walking more. Or how about going dancing? Meet new people, have fun, and get some great exercise.

*Don't forget to exercise when you're traveling or on vacation. Pack comfortable walking shoes or a swimsuit. Get out and see the sights on foot instead of by car.

*No matter what exercise you choose, start slowly and build up over time. Walk a few blocks this week. Each week, add another block until you're getting a good workout. If you have any health problems, check with your doctor first.

Exercise is more than burning calories. For most people, exercise is fun, helps reduce stress, and keeps you in good shape. It makes you feel alive, and you'll have more energy. So find an activity you like, and you'll be fit for life.

Obesity Increases Risk

Scientific research has shown that the risk of serious chronic health problems is increased for obese people in compared to those of normal body weight. Some of the physical complications that can occur more frequently among the obese include hypertension, stroke, diabetes mellitus, pulmonary disease, osteoarthritis, gout, and impairment of cardiac function.

The risk factor survey defined obesity as a body weight greater than 120% of ideal weight. Ideal weight refers to the body weight considered appropriate for individuals of a particular height and sex. For example, the ideal weight for a female 5'7" is 140 pounds, while the ideal weight for a male, 5'10" is 158 pounds. By dividing an individual's actual body

weight by the ideal weight and multiplying by 100, the percent of weight to ideal body weight is determined. If this percentage is greater than 120, the person is considered obese. Since both height and weight were collected as part of the 1982 and 1986 surveys, this calculation has been performed for every survey participant in both years.

The percentage of survey respondents considered obese did not change appreciably from 1982 to 1986, increasing slightly from 23% to 25%. The results of both surveys showed a trend toward increased prevalence of obesity with increasing age, peaking at 35% among 1982 survey respondents 45-54 years of age and 43% among 1986 survey respondents 55-64 years of age.

Your Lifestyle is the Key to Wellness

Today, most Americans die from heart disease, cancer, stroke and accidents. Many deaths can be **PREVENTED** by changes in lifestyle and health habits.

Ask Yourself — Do I use tobacco or abuse alcohol?

Do I get enough exercise?

Do I eat right and maintain my proper weight?

Am I under too much stress?

**YOUR HEALTH DEPENDS A LOT ON YOU!
DON'T SMOKE**

Smoking causes most cases of lung cancer. It is also a leading

cause of heart disease, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, stroke, etc. Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

Tips To Help You Quit

*Get Rid of Reminders such as ashtrays and matches

*Change Smoking Routines (for example, no cigarettes with coffee or after meals).

*Join a Support Group for support and help in quitting.

*Avoid Places where you usually smoke: parties, bars, etc.

LIMIT ALCOHOL USE

Overuse can result in serious health problems, such as some kinds of cancer, heart problems, liver and

brain damage, ulcers, and gastritis. Alcohol abuse is a major social problem, causing serious family and job troubles. Drinking is also a major factor in deaths from car accidents.

Tips To Avoid Abuse

*Avoid Social Situations that encourage excessive drinking.

*Never Drink before driving.

*Be Alert for early signs of alcohol dependence - drinking alone, drinking to escape, etc.

*Get Help for drinking problems. Ask your physician to refer you to sources of help.

GET ENOUGH EXERCISE

Most physicians recommend at

least 20 minutes of cardiovascular exercise 3 or more times a week.

BENEFITS of regular exercise:

***HEART** pumps more efficiently; circulation improves.

***LUNGS** are better able to process oxygen.

***FITNESS**, muscle tone and endurance improve - digestion and sleep often improve, too.

***WEIGHT** and cholesterol level decrease (with proper diet).

***EMOTIONAL HEALTH** improves - you feel better about yourself.

EAT THE RIGHT FOODS in the right amounts.

No single food or food group supplies all the nutrients you need; eat a **VARIETY** of foods.

MANAGE STRESS

Pressures, demands and worries that make you feel tense are facts of life. The key is to keep them within manageable limits. Some stress can be good, but too much can **interfere** with your normal activities and contribute to **many medical problems** — some serious. For example: fatigue, headaches, cramps, prolonged depression, heart disease, ulcers and colitis can result from stress.

Preventing Adolescent Drug Abuse



Alcohol is the most widely used drug among American youth. In surveys of high school seniors, 66% report having used alcohol in the past month. Alcohol is believed to be a major cause of all fatal and nonfatal traffic accidents involving teenage drivers. It is also linked to thousands of adolescent drownings, suicides, and injuries. This update focuses on the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's (NIAA) **Literature Review on Alcohol and Youth**, a report which challenges some longstanding beliefs about prevention of drug and alcohol abuse.

Highlights from the report:

* Youngsters who begin drinking before the age of 15 appear to be the strongest candidates for later alcohol abuse. Alarming, longitudinal studies are indicating that children are beginning to drink at increasingly early ages. Contrary to earlier conclusions, researchers now believe that **drinking with family members at home** can lead to later alcohol problems. A

Canadian study found that the earlier they drink with the family at home the earlier they will drink **outside** the home.

* Researchers conclude that **early prevention** before youngsters face peer and media pressures, will be the most effective approach. The targeted audience for prevention efforts are 8-12 year-olds and their parents.

Parents are the strongest prevention factor for 8-12 year-olds. Factors that seem to be important are:

* **Parental disapproval of alcohol use by youth.** Minnesota adolescents were asked, "If you came home from a party and your parents found out that you had been drinking, how upset do you think they would be?" Researchers concluded that the degree to which teens believed their parents would be upset was more strongly correlated with non-use of drugs than any other item (Wood, et al., 1984).

* **Strong family relationships** Drug abuse is greatest in those

families where there is:

* a lack of closeness or bonding
* a lack of parental involvement in children's activities
* a lack of or inconsistent discipline

* Poor communication
"Drug abuse is thought to arise in part from failed coping efforts; in families in which constructive coping resources and responses have been formed and continue to develop to meet the demands that arise from predictable and unpredictable stressors and crises, family members do not generally abuse drugs...Well-organized, lovingly close families characterized by open communication and mutual respect may have members who briefly experiment with alcohol or marijuana but do not experience members who have serious, lasting drug habits." (Needle et al.)

* **Role modeling by adults of chemically-free problem solving and coping.**

Realistic expectations for children—especially academic expectation.

Observed Benefits Of An Effective Exercise Program

1. Increase in mental alertness.
2. Improved memory.
3. Ability to study effectively and efficiently.
4. Ability to cope effectively with problems of stress
5. Ability to communicate effectively.
6. Self-discipline leading to a healthier lifestyle.
7. Ability to affirm others.
8. Goals clarified to achieve greater spiritual development.
9. Increase in overall level of energy.
10. Decrease in the severity of illness.
11. Decrease in the duration and frequency of illness.
12. Am affirmed by others.
13. Ability to recognize feelings.
14. Ability to express feelings constructively.
15. Positive outlook on life.
16. Sense of well-being.
17. Self-confidence.
18. Sense of accomplishment.
19. Nutritional awareness.
20. Ability to use the relaxation response effectively.
21. Decreased periods of anxiety.
22. Periods of depression decreased or eliminated.

Employers Sick Over "Illness Behavior" of Workers

Companies across the country are becoming concerned about the "illness behavior" of their employees. Employers are paying higher health insurance premiums each year and are losing valuable man-hours because of health problems that may be preventable in workers. In 1985, American companies spent an average of \$2,560 per employee in health-care costs. In that same year, 60 billion health-care dollars were spent on cardiovascular disease alone. Companies have not become complacent, but have attacked the problem head-on.

In reality, companies are addressing employee lifestyles, or illness of employees. Richard Sloan and

Jessie Gruman, in a recent article published in *Personnel Administrator*, state that the objective of workplace health promotion programs is to contain the illness behavior of an employee, and not just the illness itself. Workplace health promotion or wellness programs are rapidly gaining popularity in companies all across the nation. Health promotion programs not only help companies strengthen their bottom lines of profit but also help employees improve lifestyles and overall health.

Wellness programs address the issues of employee health and illness through preventive measures. For example, of seven identifiable risk

factors for cardiovascular disease (CVD), only one cannot be addressed within a wellness program, and that factor is family history. Unhealthy lifestyles undoubtedly lead to physical and medical problems. Smoking, obesity, improper diet, the lack of exercise, high blood pressure, and driven, aggressive (type A) behavior patterns can all lead to CVD and other illnesses. All of these factors are addressed in wellness programs. Employees can be made aware of them, and can be given incentives to adopt healthy practices into their own lives. Anxiety and stress can also add to unhealthy lifestyles. For example, incompatibility between the worker

and workplace can lead to stress, which may lead to illness symptoms, which may result in actual physical illness. Workers can be educated not only about unhealthy behavior, but also how to control anxieties and fears that may exacerbate unhealthy lifestyles.

Employees are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles not only for their employers' sake, but also for their personal sake and for the welfare of their family. The employee is encouraged to take home what is learned at the worksite health promotion meetings. If the entire family adopts wellness behaviors, all family members will have a built-in support system to perpetuate healthy

lifestyles.

Everyone, no matter how fit or healthy, can benefit from a health promotion program. If your worksite does not currently have a wellness program, let the personnel office know of your desires. You can also contact your family physician, the county health department, or the nearest extension agent. Wellness makes sense for your employer, your family, and you!

James A. Yankech
Graduate Assistant
Human Development and the Family

Behavior Change Needs Family Support

There is an increased focus and interest in the family as a viable and important social institution. It is becoming more apparent to those of diverse political persuasions that the family is the core influence affecting modern society. Helping families recognize and use their strengths and resources more fully is a realistic goal.

The family is recognized as a most necessary support structure in dealing with the stresses and strains of everyday living. On an interpersonal level, our primary relationship in the family helps you assume a productive role in society. Family members can support and encourage each other in living a lifestyle which

maximizes the potential of all members.

Several health behavior characteristics have been identified as significant factors correlated with increased health risk for individuals in the family. People who exercise routinely are believed to be in better health than those who do not. The Framingham Study showed that the rate of coronary disease for men with sedentary lifestyles was about three times higher than for active men. People regularly exercise report feelings of psychological well-being. The family, including all the children, can sit down together and discuss a family exercise plan and set goals for each member to exer-

cise regularly. Family outings can be planned that involve everyone such as hiking, running, bicycling or other sports.

Obesity, or being greater than twenty percent over ideal weight, is another health risk factor shown to increase mortality rates and is associated with hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular impairment, and psycho-social problems. Research has shown that only a few dieters are able to lose weight and maintain that loss. In order to achieve success, individuals need an environment that supports their efforts for change.

Our cultures have a powerful influence on how we live. The

family can become a supportive environment encouraging members to change. Junk food, high calorie desserts, and high fat diets can be eliminated from the household for the entire family; not just one or two members. It can become a norm for the family to support and encourage behavioral change. Other significant factors associated with loss of health and well-being are smoking cigarettes (which is associated with a significant increase in morbidity and mortality rates), hypertension, alcohol use, blood cholesterol level, and seat belt use. It is important for families to make changes in the every day way of doing things; to build new wellness norms together

for all members. Family members can be connected and committed to one another by encouraging all members to wear seat belts when driving or riding in a car and feeling free to ask each other for help when they become "over-loaded". The family can be our greatest resource for a life of happiness and well-being. It can mobilize resources for a healthy lifestyle for all of its members.

Jana Riggert
Graduate Student
Human Development
and The Family

Life in the Balance

The quality of your life may well depend on your ability to balance the physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, social and occupational dimensions. Allowing one dimension to become out of balance, either through emphasis or neglect, will lead to health and lifestyle problems.

Fred Leafgren, assistant chancellor at the University of Wisconsin, points out that with a proper balance in these dimensions, you can reduce the amount of illness and reduce the risk of premature death. Keith Sehnert, M.D., a physician with Trinity Health Care in Minneapolis, MN, indicates that most illnesses are caused by an imbalance in body/mind/spirit.

If you feel that a change is neces-

sary to improve the quality of your life, Molly Mottler from Healthwise, Inc. in Boise, ID recommends that individuals take responsibility for themselves, develop a positive attitude and surround themselves with a supportive environment. Change in lifestyle is a difficult process and should be initiated with small changes as opposed to drastic measures. Small changes in lifestyle are more easily adopted and therefore will have a more lasting affect.

Examples of addressing each dimension include: aerobic exercise at least 3 times a week; balanced nutrition incorporating 100% of the Recommended Daily Allowances for all nutrients; planning a time each

day for personal reflection; an awareness of stress, how it affects you, and methods that you can use to reduce it; develop mentally stimulating activities; maintain family and social relationships; and employment that is pleasant and positive.

Remember that changes should be adopted slowly so that they will be maintained.

Bruce Ritschar
Graduate Assistant for the
Outdoor Adventures Program
University of Nebraska

Choosing To Be Well

Abraham Lincoln once observed that "most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." Dr. Leor Rottmann, of the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, would tell students in his Family Wellness course that "most folks are about as well as they make up their minds to be."

His students learn that wellness is a matter of making healthy lifestyle choices and accepting self responsibility for implementing those choices.

Our culture is fascinated by the promise of medical "high technology" but most Americans past their infancy cannot look to high tech medicine to increase their level of wellness or extend their life expectancy by more than two or three years.

exercise. Walking, cycling, running or swimming are great.

2. **Change your eating habits.** Reduce your intake of saturated fats which contribute to cardiac disease. Increase your consumption of vegetables, fruits and high fiber foods to help reduce the risk of colon cancer.

3. **Quit smoking.**

4. **Quit using drugs and alcohol.**

5. **Fasten your seatbelt.**

6. **Take time to nurture your marital and family relationships.**

7. **Share your faith with your family and take an active part in the life of your church or synagogue.**

8. **Make time for quiet meditation and reflection** to help reduce stress and anxiety.

Families and individuals who choose to adopt a healthy lifestyle and accept the responsibility for some rather simple changes, can expect to enjoy a significant increase in their level of wellness and extend their life expectancy by as much as 11 years! Families that plan together for these changes and support one another in them can expect to enjoy much greater success than those who "go it alone."

These simple changes can get you and your family on the road to wellness:

1. **Choose to exercise.** At least three times a week you should engage in vigorous (aerobic)

These lifestyle changes sound strikingly simple but their power to improve our quality and quantity of life is staggering. Most people fail in their attempts to make these changes because of a host of "hidden" influences including cultural heritage, family history, lack of self esteem and environmental pressures. Those who plan with their family to implement these changes will find the support of the significant others in their life gives them valuable additional support.

Will you choose a healthy lifestyle? Will you let your family help you to wellness? How well will you make up your mind to be?

James E. Krotz
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese
of Nebraska

Don't Worry : Be Happy!

Living in the 20th century isn't all it's cracked up to be. We have wonderful conveniences such as washing machines, automobiles, VCR's, and microwave dinners. We are so busy these days with job demands and family activities that these conveniences are life savers. Yes, modern life is fast, furious and fun. But it can also be exasperating.

We are sometimes too busy to cook, so we pop a high salt, high fat dinner into the microwave because it's fast. We then become couch potatoes after dinner, watching a movie we rented on the VCR. On top of all this, there are the daily hassles of life. Most of us worry too much, and rather than understanding and coping with stress, we tend to let it control us, allowing ourselves to feel miserable.

According to Dr. Ronald Herberman, director of the Pittsburgh Cancer Institute, "It doesn't seem to be so much whether one is exposed to stress or not, but how people are reacting to similar types of stress. How can we achieve a sense of overall well being and balance in our lives, when it seems as though there are so many disincentives in our culture to do so?

First of all, it might help to learn to identify stress. After we can learn

to recognize the signals of stress, we can begin to cope with it. Keep a daily diary of the things that make you feel stressed out. Look it over after a couple of weeks you might find some simple things you do that creates problems.

***Talk to yourself.** Have a little chat when things are driving you batty. Don't let emotions get the better of you.

***Don't fight what you can't change.** If your car breaks down, for example, realize that it's not your fault, and that it happens to everyone sometimes. Make the best of it.

***Call a friend when things get you down.** Have fun! Research has shown that people without friends and family are more likely to get sick or have bad moods.

***Exercise.** As well as being good for you, it's also a natural relaxer. It can physically relieve stress. If you are in shape, you are more likely to handle the physical effects of stress.

***Diet.** Good nutrition can prevent major maladies such as cancer, heart disease, and osteoporosis. Even though it's easier to buy convenience foods, (especially after having a trying day) try to eat fresh foods, lean meats, and foods low in salt and fat. You'll feel better!

***Incorporate humor into your daily routine.** Some of the best memories I have of growing up in my family-the times we'd spend sitting around the kitchen table after Sunday dinner, laughing about something trivial or reminiscing about something silly one of us did.

***And finally, have a positive outlook.** A positive attitude toward stress is to regard it as an opportunity to grow. Part of the response to a stress, good or bad, depends upon the person's attitude toward stress, which can be at least in part, under the control of the individual. Being happy and positive is catching. If you have a positive outlook, so will your children. It helps boost morale for the whole family if you set an example and are positive, even when things don't seem to be going well. Your family will feel better about themselves and have a warm feeling about their family ties.

A colleague once said a phrase to me which I always remembered and now incorporate into my daily life: We don't just "have" good days, we "make" good days.

Diane Crouch, Counselor
Division of Rehabilitation Services
State of Nebraska

Healthy Heartbeats

AGE	TARGET ZONE
20 years	120-150 beats per minute
25 years	117-146 beats per minute
30 years	114-142 beats per minute
35 years	111-138 beats per minute
40 years	108-135 beats per minute
45 years	105-131 beats per minute
50 years	102-127 beats per minute
60 years	93-116 beats per minute
70 years	90-113 beats per minute

Plant Your Garden Now

Spring is a time when many of us plant a garden for a multitude of reasons. Years ago I planted a garden but found that it was very hard for me to maintain. But last week I decided to try again and spent two days tilling, planting and watering. It was a peaceful time for me and I felt good about myself when I was done.

Let us take a look at a garden and the efforts to have one in regard to your lifestyle. Bear with me because this comparison is hard to visualize sometimes. Living our lives in a healthy way requires planning just as we do for a garden. We want the fruits it produces, but we know that it will take a process of steps to obtain those fruits. The first step is planning what we want to reap. With my prior garden, I know that a

variety of vegetables would be best for me and I got excited about that. Likewise, in our lives we know we need a variety of interests in our lives to feel productive. This is evident every day when all of us attempt to juggle the different aspects of our lives; such as exercise, eating right, relating to others, work, and our spirituality. It is difficult to do, and when we are not able to do that balancing act, sometimes we find ourselves out-of-sync which leads to illness. Having good health seems to require that balance of everything in our lives.

This leads us to the second step of maintaining all of that we planted. I had planted a variety of vegetables but my main interest was in the tomatoes and cucumbers: two vegetables I love to eat. The others —

the carrots, the corn, and the peas, soon began to be overrun by weeds. I told myself that it really did not matter because I really did not eat them, but before I knew it the weeds were moving into my tomatoes and cucumbers!

This can happen in our lives when we create our life to be one-sided by participating in just one or two areas and letting the others go. The "weeds" creep into our very being and the areas we ignore communicate with us the best way they can be demanding our attention. If we have been eating unwisely we find out quickly that our body cannot function that way. Or if we have spent the majority of our time at our place of employment and leaving out our family; I can guarantee that one way or the other, our families

will let us know. There is one interesting point to take notice of though — when my other vegetables were weeded over, they did not die. Matter-of-fact, underneath the weeds I found the sweetest peas just waiting for me. It is there if we plant it and our garden will produce if we maintain it.

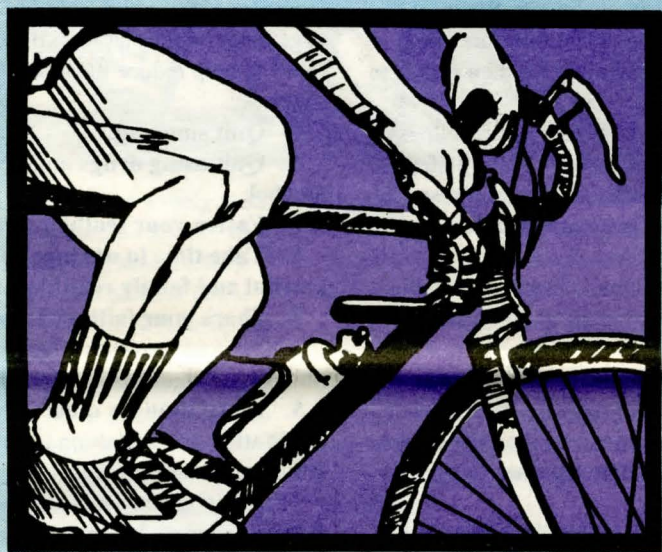
The last step, one we often forget about, is to taste and enjoy the fruits of our garden. Have you ever watched someone work in their garden who does not enjoy it? I suppose we all have and we all have been the one who did not want to do the work. One of the most refreshing things I have seen is to watch a person who wants to be there working in their garden. Watch the concentration on their faces and the peacefulness when they see the first

vegetable appear. I have even known people who talk to their plants in the garden each night. Some people might find that questionable, but "don't knock it until you've tried it". Much has been written about the healing process that happens when we work with the soil. It is almost a re-birthing — planting a seed, watching it grow and harvesting the rewards.

Look at the garden of your life. Check out what you've planted in it and how much time you spend on it; but most important, do you enjoy it? Happy Gardening!

Francie Wagner
Wellness Director
Metro Area Transit-Omaha

Shortcuts



A fit body and strong heart demand tough workouts and no cutting corners

Were someone to invent a way to get a fabulous physique and a healthy heart without leaving the sofa, the world's couch potatoes would embrace it like a bag of cheese puffs. For now, many of these less motivated mortals are settling for what they think may be the next best thing: Shortcuts ranging from electronic muscle stimulation to superabbreviated exercise regimens that claim to deliver the payoff of a workout with considerably less work. Even fitness buffs who are very much in shape resort to pills and potions to increase

muscle mass and endurance with less sweat. And while most of these fitness shortcuts should do some good, few of them work; some can cause serious damage.

Makers of "toning tables," for example, would have you believe that all you need do is lie comfortably on different motorized tables that move your arms and legs to improve muscle strength, blood circulation and flexibility. Many health spas have such tables. But the only energy you expend is fishing \$6 to \$9 out of your wallet for each hour you spend being manipulated. In a study of 40 people who used the tables over 16 weeks for 50 minutes a day, 4 days a week, exercise physiologist

Frank Katch of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst found no improvement in cardiovascular fitness, flexibility or the levels of energy and calories expended. Furthermore, Katch says a table workout will not increase muscle strength in healthy people, since the tables do not provide the necessary resistance required to build muscle capacity.

Poor results also await those who bank on the electrical muscle stimulator (EMS), which is designed to shock you into shape, literally. EMS makes a muscle contract by delivering electrical currents, up to about 100 milliamps or about one tenth the amount that flows through a 125-watt light bulb, to one or more muscles through contact pads placed on the skin. It is available mainly at specialized health spas, for \$20 to \$25 for a 45-minute session. Like the tables, EMS will not build muscle strength because it does not provide resistance. Nor does it "achieve up to 1,000 muscle contractions in sit-ups, push-ups and leg lifts," a claim made by Body by Design, a now defunct Boston health salon specializing in EMS, and echoed throughout the world of EMS promoters. The Federal Trade Commission sent them all a message last week when it signed a consent agreement with the former owners of Body by Design in which they agreed not to misrepresent any fitness program in the future.

Somewhere between the gimmicks and a real workout are the new supershort workouts. For decades, the gold standard for achieving any benefit from aerobic activity such as jogging or swimming has been a minimum of 20 minutes of high-

intensity exercise three times a week. Yet some authors and sports doctors claim you can reap benefits from workouts as short as 12 minutes. In a study of 23 women of average fitness who spent 12 minutes on a stationary bicycle three times a week, Dr. James Rippe of the University of Massachusetts Medical School found that their aerobic conditioning improved 10 percent to 15 percent. Nonetheless, his findings do not impress purists like Michael Pollock of the University of Florida, who cites 50 scientific papers as evidence that 20 minutes a day three times a week is the minimum time necessary to improve the heart's ability to pump blood and the muscles' capacity to utilize oxygen.

The shortest of the shortcuts are pills and injections that can help you run faster and lift more weight without working harder. Among the most popular are anabolic steroids, synthetic versions of the male sex hormone testosterone, which aids in muscle growth. Steroids do seem to work but have been linked to liver damage and heart disease.

On the other hand, dosing with minerals, vitamins, amino acids and other supplements probably will not hurt you. But there is no scientific evidence that it will enhance strength or endurance either, despite claims made in "muscle magazines" and by manufacturers. Protein breaks down during digestion into 20 amino acids used by cells, among other things, to create new muscle tissue. That is why some people believe that loading up on amino acids and protein will help you build muscle. But it is too soon to tell, says Peter Lemon, a professor of applied physiology at Kent State University

and a recognized expert on protein supplements. Sports nutritionists agree.

Liquid assets. Athletes also should approach diets, power snacks and other so-called fitness foods skeptically. The only nutritional advice of proven value is to consume a diet high in carbohydrates and low in fat. Complex carbohydrates, found in grains, fruits and vegetables, prevent fatigue by maintaining the body's energy sources—glucose in the blood and glycogen in muscles. When consumed during a lengthy workout, Gatorade, Exceed and other drinks whose content is 6 percent to 7 percent carbohydrate can help you keep going beyond the point where you might normally poop out. They may even enhance performance. In a recent study, men consumed about a cup of different liquids every 20 minutes for 2 hours while exercising on a stationary bicycle. They rested for 30 minutes and then started to ride again. Those who drank a 6 percent carbohydrate solution rode significantly faster than those drinking either water or a 2 1/2 percent carbohydrate solution. The study also confirmed that carbohydrate drinks, which digest slowly, do not cause cramps and nausea as doctors once believed. When exercising for fewer than 90 minutes, water will suffice.

Clearly, some shortcuts are alluring. But the time and money you'll save by avoiding them can be better used to start a regimen that really will work.

Source: U.S. News & World Report, p. 70, May 29, 1989

FOR A HEALTHY HEART:

- * aim for a blood cholesterol level under 200 mg/dL;
- * keep your blood pressure under 140/90 mm HG;
- * control your weight;
- * don't smoke; and
- * exercise regularly.

QUITTING SMOKING AND THE FEAR OF FAT

Have you thought about quitting cigarette smoking, but are afraid of gaining weight? With careful planning, you can control your weight after quitting smoking. The following ideas can help.

- *Drink a glass of water before meals.
- *Have low-calorie snacks on hand like fruit, vegetables, popcorn without butter, bagels, and low-calorie sodas.
- *Chew sugarless gum instead of eating sweet foods.
- *Don't quit near a holiday when high-calorie foods may be hard to turn down.
- *Start a walking program. Walk briskly for 20 minutes or more every day.
- *When you feel the urge to smoke, go for a walk, talk to a friend, and remove yourself from the situation.

The fear of smoking should always be greater than the fear of fat.

Coping With Holiday Stress



We are reminded with each crisp fall evening how quickly the season is slipping by and coasting right into a busy, busy season. Just thinking of the coming holidays can set our emotions flying. There is a feeling of excitement and happiness. We anticipate renewing family ties, carrying out special family traditions, or seeing the joy in a loved one's eyes when beholding a gift or a favorite food.

The next emotion often is panic remembering what it was like the last time. For some of us it was too much to do in too little time resulting in being too tired and irritable to enjoy ourselves and guests. For others it could be a deep "case of the blues." Somehow the children never seem to be in their good behavioral mood and bills can grow outrageously.

What can we do to control this holiday stress? Start early, like now, and think through the tasks, the time

and the traditions. Outline an activity calendar, setting reasonable dates and toals when each task should be accomplished. Build in time for fun, relaxation and a normal pattern of living.

If this outline still indicates too much too fast it is time to let something go. Ask yourself what's the worst that can happen if I don't do that? If this is not done will it make a difference five years from now? Can an old tradition be replaced by starting a new one requiring less time, work or cost?

The feelings of tiredness, irritability, depression as well as social behavior of adults and children can also be "triggered" by a disrupted routine. Family gatherings, though enjoyable, can mean tiring traveling, crowded quarters, strange beds and noises and sleepless nights. This can be especially hard on little ones who normally excite easily.

Holiday stress can be in another

form. It can be loneliness or depressive feelings for what once was and cannot be. These "blues" can occur from too much distance to get home; of the loss of a loved one who had shared fun times; or less income. In such cases as these, emotional first aid or an activity may be the answer. Let your outline (or plan) include: favorite activities-maybe it's music, walking or potting flowers; a plan to accomplish something you'll feel great about, learn a new skill, re-sort your wardrobe, clean out the attic; a visit to an old friend or creating a new one with whom you can share your thoughts.

Don't panic about what's coming ahead. Take control by giving it some thought!

Behaviorists Call S-T-R-E-S-S More Dangerous To Health Than A Body Full Of G-E-R-M-S

When you or someone in your family becomes ill, there are authorities who tell us you don't always spell the cause **G-E-R-M-S**. Often you can spell it **S-T-R-E-S-S**.

According to the Health Insurance Institute, behaviorists believe many major ailments such as heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes and peptic ulcers frequently have nothing to do with germs.

The culprit, say behaviorists, is often a cluster of "life-change" events occurring within a short span of time.

Even in other diseases caused by germs, they say, the germs—which are always with us—only move in for business **after** the victim has weakened himself.

A mother-in-law, says Dr. Thomas M. Holmes, professor of psychiatry at the University of Washington in Seattle, can be more instrumental in bringing on a cold than the common cold germ.

That's because her visit represents

a particular life-change event that the average person finds difficult to cope with.

It's as simple as not being able to deal with a stress situation, then another, and another until they pile up. This is the point where your resistance falters, and you become susceptible to diseases caused by germs such as tuberculosis and viral infections. But it is the life-changes that set things off.

Dr. Holmes, a pioneer in the study of psychosomatic medicine dating back nearly 40 years, explains it this way:

"The discovery that germs cause illness failed to unravel one important riddle—the mystery of illness's onset: why does a person sicken at one time but not another?"

Working with neurologist Harold G. Wolff of Cornell University Medical College and New York Hospital, the team studied more than 5,000 patients, examining life events that preceded their illnesses.

"They reported," Dr. Holmes says, "a wide range of events—death of a spouse, a visit by a mother-in-law, a change of job, divorce, birth of a child."

He says they also discovered that events of ordinary life—marriage, a vacation, a new job—could help trigger illness, "because the effort required to cope with these events weakens resistance." He adds:

"The findings challenge our ideas about disease, and about the roles that psychology and sociology play in health...."

"It may be that effective treatment of disease requires analysis of choice and actions, along with medical therapies."

Consequently, Dr. Holmes and his associates have developed a "Social Readjustment Rating Scale" assigning a value to each life-change event.

The key here, says Dr. Holmes is that "the more change you have, the more likely you are to get sick."

If a person's score adds up to

more than 300 points in a year, it increases the likelihood of serious illness such as a heart attack by almost 90 percent within the near future.

With 150 to 299 Life Change Units, Dr. Holmes says he can accurately predict that about 50 percent with this score will get sick in the near future, while those with less than 150 LCUs have only about a 30 percent chance of getting sick in the near future.

Dr. Holmes also points out that "the period at risk for becoming seriously ill is self-limited." That is, if no new life crisis intervenes, the risk declines sharply after about two years.

Here are the top 20 events on Dr. Holmes's Social Readjustment Rating Scale, with the point count for each:

Life Event	Mean Value
1. Death of a spouse	100
2. Divorce	73
3. Marital separation	65
4. Jail term	63
5. Death of family member	63
6. Personal injury or illness	53
7. Marriage	50
8. Fired at work	47
9. Marital reconciliation	45
10. Retirement	45
11. Change in health of family member	44
12. Pregnancy	40
13. Sex difficulties	39
14. Gain new family member	89
15. Business readjustment	39
16. Change in financial state	38
17. Death of close friend	37
18. Change to different line of work	36
19. Change in number of arguments with spouse	35
20. Mortgage over \$10,000	31

800 Numbers And Others Important To You!

Abortion Hotline	1-800-772-9100
Aids Prevention Hotline	1-800-541-2437
Alzheimer's Disease Center	1-800-426-6512
American Cancer Society	1-800-227-2345
American Diabetes Association	1-800-628-8808
American Heart Association-Nebraska	1-800-642-8400
American Liver Foundation	1-800-223-0179
American Lung Association	1-800-433-0528
American Osteopathic Association	1-800-962-9008
American Paralysis Association	1-800-225-0292
American Parkinson Disease Association	1-800-223-2732
Anorexia Bulimia Treatment & Education Center	1-800-622-2832
Arthritis Foundation Information Hotline	1-800-722-7383
Cancer Information Service	1-800-255-5505
Cancer Lifeline	1-800-331-3336
Cardiac Monitoring Center	1-800-331-3336
Celiac Sprue Information and Referral	1-402-558-0600
Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline	1-800-752-6200
Childhelp	1-800-422-4453
Consumer Hot Line	1-800-441-2332
Consumer Product Safety Commission	1-800-638-2772
Cooperative Extension	1-402-472-1625
Critical Care Hotline	1-800-255-8641
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation	1-800-362-4440
Diabetes Treatment Centers of America	1-800-327-3822
Dial-A-Hearing Screening Test	1-800-222-3277
Domestic Violence Hotline	1-800-562-6025
Drinking Water Hotline	1-800-538-4791
Drug & Poison Information Center	1-800-872-5111
Drug Abuse Hotline	1-800-538-4840
Drug Abuse Inform-Line	1-800-522-5353
Drug Abuse Information & Referral Line	1-800-662-4357
Dyslexia Society	1-800-222-3123
Elderly Abused & Neglected Hotline	1-800-392-0210
Environmental Protection Agency	1-402-439-5080
Epilepsy Foundation of America	1-800-332-1000

FDA Food Safety	1-816-374-6366
For Pets Sake	1-800-346-3738
Health Concerns	1-800-233-9355
Health Information Hot Line	1-800-445-2637
Health Walking Technique, Inc.	1-800-367-7094
Health Yourself	1-800-356-4791
Healthy Lifestyle	1-800-752-2895
Hearing Aid Helpline	1-800-521-5247
Heart to Heart	1-800-422-5441
Heartbeat	1-800-243-8537
Institute for Better Health	1-800-722-9355
Institute For Rehabilitation	1-800-447-3422
International Childbirth Education	1-800-624-4934
Medical Help Hotline	1-800-435-7243
Medical Hotline	1-800-622-2151
Multiple Sclerosis Center	1-800-422-3042
National Adolescent Suicide Hotline	1-800-621-4000
National Association For Sickle Cell Disease	1-800-421-8453
National Association of Senior Citizens	1-800-628-8029
National Cancer Institute	1-800-638-6694
National Council on Alcoholism	1-800-344-3400
National Council on Compulsive Gambling	1-800-522-4700
National Down Syndrome Society	1-800-221-4602
National Family Planning & Reproductive Health	1-800-221-9637
National Fed. of Parents for Drug Free Youth	1-800-554-5437
National Food Addiction Hotline	1-800-872-0088
National Headache Foundation	1-800-843-2256
National Kidney Foundation	1-800-622-9010
National Multiple Sclerosis Information Hotline	1-800-622-9010
National Sids Foundation	1-800-221-7437
NE Department of Environmental Health	1-402-471-2541
Nebraska Department of Agriculture	1-402-471-2394
Nebraska Department of Health	1-402-471-2122
Nebraska Poison Control Center	1-800-642-9999
Nebraska Radiological Health	1-402-471-2168
Pacemaker Evaluation Service	1-800-242-7137

Parkinson Foundation	1-800-221-7437
Partners in Aging	1-800-227-7417
Planned Parenthood	1-800-642-6543
Planned Parenthood Facts of Life Line	1-800-862-6411
Poison Control Center	1-800-843-0505
The American Cleft-Palate Educational Foundation	1-800-242-5308
The Head Injury Center	1-800-533-2658
The Hernia Center	1-800-437-6427
United Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	1-703-836-3410
US Department of Agriculture	1-202-447-2791
USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline	1-800-535-4555

NEED HEALTH INFORMATION?

Dial 1-800...

The cost of health care is going up, but free medical information is just a phone call away when you use **Health Hotlines**, a new booklet from the National Library of Medicine.

The 34-page booklet lists toll-free numbers and addresses for nearly 250 organizations that can answer your health-related questions. It also includes a convenient index by subject.

From headaches to hearing and from aging to AIDS, **Health Hotlines** tells you whom to write or call toll-free for answers to your questions.

For a copy, write to:

Hotlines/HL
National Library of Medicine
Information Office
8600 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20894

News You Can Use

Program Opportunity: Emphasis is on lifestyle choices related to the depression and the enhancement of self-esteem.

The 4-H Youth Program in your county has three youth/adult discussion programs in print and available for families and groups. Each program can be 4-H or Extension Club connected or be an independent education and enrichment effort in your community.

The underlying core of these materials relates to self-concept, self-esteem building. What can you do as a parent or adult to increase your own self-esteem and how can you help youth and others increase their levels of self-esteem? All centered on how to improve lifestyle behaviors and to better handle the wear and tear of life.

Ask to become involved in these programs through your County Extension Office:

The Stress Connection
Self-Care: A Prevention Program for Alcohol and
Other Drug Problems
Dare To Be You

Desirable Body Weight Ranges

Height*	Men (pounds)	Weight* Women (pounds)
4'10"		92-121
4'11"		95-124
5'0"		98-127
5'1"	105-134	101-130
5'2"	108-137	104-134
5'3"	111-141	107-138
5'4"	114-145	110-142
5'5"	117-149	114-146
5'6"	121-154	118-150
5'7"	125-159	121-154
5'8"	129-163	126-159
5'9"	133-167	130-164
5'10"	137-172	134-169
5'11"	141-177	
6'0"	145-182	
6'1"	149-187	
6'2"	153-192	
6'3"	157-197	

*Height without shoes, weight without clothes.

NOTE: For women 18-25 years, subtract one pound for each year under 25.

SOURCE: Adapted from the 1959 Metropolitan Desirable Weight Table.

The Good Life Report

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Hitch Your Child's Wagon To A Star

Pointing out to children where they excel and praising their accomplishments help them through the "hard times". Self-esteem is extremely important. Many people fear such praise will "swell children's heads", but on the contrary, it helps them gain self-acceptance and the confidence to tackle difficult and challenging tasks.

When we accept ourselves we also respect ourselves; our positive self-image allows us both to approach others with an expectation of being welcomed and to exert all available power to accomplish goals. It provides the basis for creativity, for satisfaction, effective functioning, and involvement in concerns that go beyond self-interest. It provides us with the courage to resist the pressure to conform and to dare to be innovative.

Although there is no easy recipe for helping children develop a high sense of self-worth, one thing is certain, parents have considerable effect on how children think of

themselves. It is important for children to have a high self-concept and feeling of adequacy. Parents can provide the encouragement and support to help our children develop a positive outlook during their young lives.

Children will come to value themselves as they have been valued by the significant people in their lives, treated with respect, they will respect themselves and others.

Help your child "hitch his wagon to a star" by becoming an involved, concerned, and caring parent. Help the children discover who they are by setting a good example for them to mirror. Accept your children for what they are, not for what they do. Feeling loved helps a child to accept a lack of skills without damage to self-esteem. Warm affection in itself does not guarantee that a child will feel valued, he or she also needs to feel understood.

Self-esteem benefits its possessor and everyone who encounters them. The self-confident person is more

generous toward others. Let's give the children a chance to "hitch their wagon to a star," to be the best they can be by being the best parents we can be.

That man is a success who has lived well, laughed often and loved much; who has gained the respect of intelligent men and the love of children; who has filled his niche and accomplished his task; who leaves a world better than he found it, whether by an improved poppy, a perfect poem, or a rescued soul; who never lacked appreciation of earth's beauty or failed to express it; who looked for the best in others and gave the best he had.

R.L. Stevenson

Kim Bearnes
Extension Agent
Home Economics

SW4 Unit, University of Nebraska

"Family Wellness New Focus"

Family life educators at a recent conference in Lincoln expressed support for incorporating a family wellness focus into current curriculum.

Until now, concentration of the group has been on teaching positive parenting skills and effective communication techniques to promote strong families. Prompted by the popularity of the wellness movement, several presentors at the gathering revealed how they have begun integrating the teaching of healthy lifestyles into their curriculum. One of these was quoted as saying, "The reality is that to remain strong and stable in today's fast-paced culture, maintaining a healthy lifestyle has become an integral part of family strengths and wellness." She went on to comment that "life parenting and communication skills, choosing and maintaining a healthy lifestyle is accomplished through

learning, and the family is the ideal environment to nurture positive health practices."

It was pointed out that working together as a family towards healthy lifestyles for each member can be a rewarding and beneficial effort which will encourage emotional and physical development, which providing family enrichment. In planning for healthy lifestyles. Families were encouraged to discuss together their current health practices as to how positive or negative they are on the family environment. Next, goals could be set, both individual and family, for achieving change. Making a commitment to change involves both time and money, so a written "contract" can often provide effective motivation. Together the family should set up individual and family plans to work toward the selected goals. These plans should

call for new health practices activated in day-to-day living. Giving each other frequent encouragement and support in making change, and frequent progress reports will help assure a more lasting result. Such an approach can assist family members make healthier, more nutritional food choices; adopt an exercise program, stop smoking; or to cut down on calories.

The future of family life education is sure to include involving family members in healthy lifestyle planning. The most successful plan will be a systematic approach which will strengthen the family through mutual support and caring.

Carol Pelan, Coordinator
Parent Assistance Line
Child Saving Institute, Omaha

SPICE UP YOUR LIFE

If you have high blood pressure, you may benefit from using less salt in your food. But that doesn't mean you have to eat bland food for the rest of your life. Variety is the spice of life. Use other spices to make your food tasty. Try lemon juice, rosemary, basil, oregano, or thyme on vegetables. Curry and dill are great on fish and poultry. Pepper and parsley taste wonderful on potatoes.

Check with your doctor before using a salt substitute. Lots of spices don't contain salt and can really liven up your food. Remember, food doesn't have to be boring. Be creative, and spice it up.

HELPFUL HEART TIPS

You're on your way! You've chosen a heart healthy exercise that you enjoy. Here are a few helpful tips to get you started.

*Begin your exercise program slowly. If you're out of shape, it's best to start at an easy pace. Set fitness goals, and work toward them.

*Ask someone to join you. An exercise buddy is fun and can provide support.

*Decide on an outdoor or indoor activity. Switching activities now and then prevents boredom and adds variety to your fitness routine.

*Make exercise part of your life. Make time for your workout before work, during your lunch hour, or after work—whenever it's convenient for you. Make a schedule, and stick to it.

Taking Stock Of Your Stock

There's nothing better than a good ol' pot of stew. But it's what goes into the pot that makes the stew good. Every good cook knows that. We need to apply the same rule to ourselves and our families. We all want to be good, wholesome and healthy people but we most often don't get there. Here's a tool to assist in making that pot of stew even better.

You need to take stock of your stock. A written record of the items that make up you is the best place to start. So get a pencil and start your recipe. Be honest and list what's in you. Got a lot of worry and stress? List it and state the amount. But where's the Joy? I am sure there is a little joy, but is it enough? What about friendly relationships; close friends, distant friends and time

with them?

Here goes the tough part for me. What's your weight? And more important, how do you feel about it and how does your family? How are your muscles, worked and exercised or weak and lazy? What do you eat? Are you addicted to any food or drink? Are you missing all the variety of foods in the grocery store? Tried any Swiss chard lately? Be specific, you need to teach your children how to make a good pot of stew also. And as we all know, unless I write it down I don't remember all of it. It may even take me several days or weeks to remember all the ingredients.

The list can go on and on about what's in the pot. But let's just mention one more. What did your mom and dad put into the pot? We

all carry their genes, their attitudes and their activity patterns. What's their pot of stew like? Look at your folks' stew and there will be a lot of discovery about your own. Once you have the recipe written down, share it with your spouse and family. Find out about any secret ingredient they threw in or one you forgot. Then, like all good recipes, share it with a friend. Ask them to comment about it and make recommendations.

So, get your pen and paper. Start writing the recipe down. Take stock in your stock and enjoy your pot of stew.

Georg Williams
Stew Taster and Pastor
Lutheran Church
Ainsworth, NE

It's Your Move!

		Coping With Stress	
Diet		Humor	
	Exercise		Quit Smoking
Family And Friendships		Quiet Time	

Wellness: It's Your Move

"Wellness"—It has a nice ring, doesn't it? Sounds like something good, something you'd like to have. But what is it? And how do you get it?

Wellness isn't any one thing; it's a combination of several components that make up your whole lifestyle. It's a healthy and comfortable balance of your own social, emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual characteristics. It's a very personal process and you're in charge. You are responsible. You are the one who makes the choices about your lifestyle.

Wellness can be yours even when

you are sick because it is a balanced lifestyle that adapts to those circumstances you cannot control. It brings a positive attitude into daily living. It's good for you and those around you.

But it's not easy. It takes a lot of self-discipline to adopt and develop lifestyle habits that you know are good for you. Still, there are a lot of things you can control.

Experience has shown that lifestyle changes are tough; changes like losing some extra pounds, learning to cope with stress, quitting smoking, easing off on the alcohol,

making some changes in your diet that would be good for your heart, or getting that exercise program started.

A good place to start might be to schedule that physical exam that you've been putting off.

The first step in your wellness program is up to you. It's your move!

Byron Stoltzenberg
Extension Agent-Agriculture
Brown-Rock-Keya Paha
Cherry County

Adapt A Wellness Program For Your Lifestyle



In the hectic pace of life, it is often difficult to start and maintain a wellness program. As the fitness movement has increased its momentum, hundreds of thousands of people have adapted wellness behaviors into their lives. But for every one person who has successfully incorporated wellness practices into their lifestyle, there are several others who have tried to do so unsuccessfully. The number of people trying to live a healthier lifestyle indicates that the public is educated as to the importance of wellness. However, people are not changing their lifestyles. As a result, the so called health revolution is failing. The problem is finding a way to motivate the public to adapt healthier lifestyles.

Studies have demonstrated tremendous drop-out rates in many areas of wellness including dieting, jogging, heart disease prevention, physical conditioning, etc. The blame for these failures seems to rest with the whole of society. Our culture accepts and even expects behaviors which we know to be unhealthy. We drive when we could walk, drive without seatbelts, continue smoking, drink and drive, eat excessively and sit in front of the T.V. because these are normal.

Knowing the sources of these negative influences and dealing with them can help you to successfully change to a healthier lifestyle. Perhaps the most important step in beginning a wellness program is to find a support group. This group might be from the office, a local gym, some other organization or your family. The group should work together to identify negative norms and develop a comprehensive plan to eliminate these norms and implement more positive ones. The group becomes a source of evaluation, support and encouragement as you alter your lifestyle.

In their pamphlet *Changing Our Health Cultures: A Family Guide To Wellness and Positive Health*, Robert F. Allen and Charlotte Kraft point out four principles important to the process. The group must remember they're all in it together. Don't dwell on who is to blame for a situation rather figure out how to improve it. Make sure the group is working from good information. Finally, think of ways to make it fun.

By following the Lifegain Six-Step Plan as outlined by Allen and Kraft, your group can build a successful wellness program.

The first step is to get the whole group together and discuss health practices on the members and the kind of influences on them. Next, set individual and group goals. Then all members must make a written or verbal commitment of time and resources necessary to attain the set goals. Group and individual plans should be set up. The fifth step is to put your new health practices into action in your daily life. The last step of the plan is to meet with the group regularly and to check with members individually between meetings to give each other encouragement and support. Our culture is well educated as to the benefits of healthy lifestyles. If we could now work to change the negative cultural norms which hinder the success of individual wellness programs, we might be able to rescue the floundering health revolution. A change toward a healthier culture must begin within these support groups.

Deborah Wille
Graduate Student
Human Development and the Family
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Sample Walking Program

	Warm up	Target zone exercising	Cool down	Total time
Week 1				
Session A	Walk slowly 5 min.	Then walk briskly 5 min.	Then walk slowly 5 min.	15 min.
Session B	Repeat above pattern.			
Session C	Repeat above pattern			
Continue with at least three exercise sessions during each week of the program				
Week 2	Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 7 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	17 min.
Week 3	Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 9 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	19 min.
Week 4	Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 11 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	21 min.
Week 5	Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 13 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	23 min.
Week 6	Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 15 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	25 min.
Week 7	Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 18 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	28 min.
Week 8	Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 20 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	30 min.
Week 9	Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 23 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	33 min.
Week 10	Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 26 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	36 min.
Week 11	Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 28 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	38 min.
Week 12	Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 30 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	40 min.

Source: Exercise and Your Heart, published by the National Institute of Health.

Finding Out About Side Effects

Almost all prescription medicines can cause side effects, some of which can be very severe and a few even fatal. In view of the danger, therefore, why are such drugs used? The answer, of course, is that the illnesses for which they're given, if left untreated, would be even more dangerous. In deciding whether to use a drug, the doctor has to weigh its potential benefits against the potential risks, and then do what seems on balance to be the best for the patient. Problems arise, however, the *WALL STREET JOURNAL* (May 20, '88) reports, because most doctors do not warn their patients about all of the potential hazards and most prescribed drugs do not have any accompanying literature that tells of the side effects that might occur. For most doctors there is not enough time for such discussions with every patient and, even

if there were, many doctors would be reluctant to tell their patients about all of the potential risks lest they become too scared to accept the treatment. Now that drugs are becoming so much more potent and effective, their potential to cause serious side effects tends to be much greater. **It is recommended, therefore, that patients ask their doctors 5 things about drugs they have been told to take.** These are its name, what it is supposed to do, how it should be taken and for how long, whether any foods, drinks or other medicines might react with it and should therefore be avoided, and whether it can cause any side effects. If the answer to the last question is yes, ask what to do if any of those side effects occur. In addition, **patients should take some responsibility in finding out about medicines for themselves.** Books that provide this information are now widely available.

The Hibernation Response

Scientists are discovering that people have the same ability to cope with a shortage of food as do small mammals. When there is a scarcity of food, some mammals conserve energy by slowing down their metabolism.

People, too, can adjust to less food, and chronic dieters seem best able to adjust to shortages. When the body is deprived of food, it adapts by causing the individual to conserve energy, store fat, and become tired. A person deprived of food usually becomes hungry, irritable, and even lethargic.

The process of severe calorie re-

striction runs counter to the dieter's attempt to lose weight. Studies have shown that people on very-low-calorie diets do not reduce their ability to store fat. It now appears that extreme calorie restriction may even increase a dieter's ability to store fat. Many persons who go on low-calorie diets stop losing weight after a few months. They stop dieting, return to normal food intake and quickly regain fat.

Richard Keesey, a psychologist at the University of Wisconsin, and his colleagues put rats on starvation diets until they reached 81 percent of their normal weight. The rats were

than allowed to eat the same amount of food they and the control group ate prior to the diet. During a week of eating, the "starved" rats gained almost 20 times more weight than the control rats on a similar diet. The starvation diet had reset their metabolism rate so they burned fewer calories and stored a higher proportion of food as fat.

This may help to explain what happens to many dieters when they resume normal eating. Their body metabolism, which has changed to conserve energy, stores the excess calories as fat so it will be ready for future periods of starvation.

Radon Poses Health Risk

There has been a lot of concern lately about radon because of Environmental Protection Agency's recommendation that all homes be tested for it.

Generally, Nebraska does not have as great a radon problem as some other states do. The Nebraska Health Department conducted a preliminary survey in 1986 and found that approximately 40 percent of the homes surveyed exceeded the recommended EPA standard of 4 picocuries per liter of air. This survey, however, was based on a relatively small number of homes across the state.

Radon is a naturally-occurring radioactive gas which occurs in nature. You cannot see it, smell it, or taste it. It is the result of the natural breakdown of uranium in soils and rocks. In outdoor air, radon is diluted to low concentrations but inside an enclosed space (such as a home) radon can accumulate.

Does radon pose a health risk?

Exposure to elevated levels of radon is associated with an increased risk of developing lung cancer. Your risk of developing lung cancer from exposure to radon depends

upon the concentration of radon and the length of time you are exposed. About 20,000 lung cancer deaths a year in the United States may be attributed to radon.

How does radon get into a home?

Radon can move through small spaces in the soil and rock on which a house is built. It can seep into a home through dirt floors, cracks in concrete floors and walls, floor drains, and joints.

How is radon detected?

Since you cannot see or smell radon, special equipment is needed to detect it. If you want to test for radon in your home, you may do a preliminary screening with a charcoal canister. The canister should be placed in the basement for a period of 3 to 5 days, after which you must send it to a laboratory to be analyzed. Charcoal canisters can be obtained for \$10-20 each from firms or individuals registered with the Nebraska Department of Health. The Health Department maintains a list of those who are qualified to offer radon testing services.

Results from a single charcoal canister test will not be definitive. If the initial screening indicates the level of radon exceeds the EPA

guideline, then you can use two or more charcoal canisters placed in the living areas of your home at periodic intervals over 12 months. This will give you a more accurate picture of the long-term concentration of radon in your home.

Another way of measuring radon following a screening is using a Track Etch or Alpha Track Detector. This device is left in a specific location in the home for a period of 3 months to one year before being analyzed by a laboratory. Costs can range up to \$50 or more for each detector.

What should be done after the tests?

Based on the test results, you may want to make modifications in your home to reduce your radon risk. However, don't make any expensive modifications without the advice of professionals.

Homeowners can contact the Division of Radiological Health at the Nebraska Health Department, 402/471-2168, if they have questions concerning radon.

If you have your home tested and have questions about the results, the Radiological Health Division will be able to help you.

Questions And Answers

Q:What Floats on Water But Can Make Your Heart Sink?

A:Fat! Especially saturated fat, which raises blood cholesterol more than anything else in your diet. Saturated fat is a type of fat found in greatest amounts in foods from animals such as meat, poultry, and whole-milk dairy products like cream, milk, ice cream, and cheese. Other examples of saturated fat include butter, lard, and the marbling and fat along the edges of meat. Some vegetable oils—like coconut, palm kernel, and palm oils—also have a lot of saturated fat.

Q:How Low Can You Get Your Cholesterol Score?

A:How low you can get your blood cholesterol depends on you. Most people can lower their high blood cholesterol level by reducing the amount of fat, saturated fat, and dietary cholesterol in the food they eat. If you're overweight, losing weight can also help lower your high blood cholesterol, as well as your blood pressure.

Have your blood cholesterol checked by your doctor. Most people should have their blood cholesterol level under 200 mg/dL.

Q:Do You Get Cuffed Enough?

A:You need to have your blood pressure checked at least every 2 years if it's normal. If your blood pressure is high (140/90 mm Hg or higher) or you're on medication for blood pressure, you need to have it checked more often. Your doctor will tell you how often.

Q:Having Another Drink?

A:Doctors say if you have high blood pressure, you should have no more than two alcoholic drinks per day. Your blood pressure is harder to control if you drink more. Also, if you have high blood pressure, you need to reduce the amount of sodium (salt) in your food, get regular exercise, lose extra weight, and take your medicine every day.

Take control of your blood pressure.